



Ambassador Ashe

Victor Ashe was nominated by President Bush to be Ambassador to the Republic of Poland on April 8, 2004, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on May 21, 2004. He was sworn in on June 23, 2004, in Washington, DC. Ambassador Ashe has visited all 16 of Poland's provinces.

Amb. Ashe's history of public service includes serving 31 years in Tennessee state and city elective offices. In December 2003, Amb. Ashe completed an unprecedented 16 years as Mayor of Knoxville, the longest mayoral tenure in the city's 213-year history. He left office as a result of term limits, which means his length of service to the city cannot be duplicated.

Amb. Ashe was born January 1, 1945, in Knoxville and attended public schools there. He graduated from the Hotchkiss School, in Lakeville, Connecticut, in 1963 and from Yale University with a BA in History in 1967. He received his law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1974.

In 1965, Mr. Ashe served as an intern in the office of Congressman Bill Brock, where he helped write a tax sharing for education bill. In 1967, he was a staff assistant in the office of then-Senator Howard Baker, who in his later career served as White House Chief of Staff and U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

Amb. Ashe was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1968, at age 23. In 1975 he was elected to the State Senate, where he served for nine years. From 1967 to 1973, Amb. Ashe served as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Air Reserves.

From 1985-1987, under President Reagan, Mr. Ashe served as the Executive Director of the Americans Outdoors Commission chaired by then-Governor (and now U.S. Senator) Lamar Alexander. Mr. Ashe was elected Knoxville's mayor in November, 1987.

As Mayor of Knoxville, Mr. Ashe established a sister city relationship with Chelm in Poland and led two delegations to the city, one in 1997 and the other in 2000. Mr. Ashe also led a delegation of U.S. mayors to Israel in 1995 and to Uganda in 2003 on the subject of helping combat HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Ashe also led efforts to improve the Knoxville's financial picture by adding to fund balance and improving the bond rating for the city, doubling the park system's acreage from five to 34 miles of greenways when he left office. He led the effort for waterfront development in his city and built a new state-of-the-art convention center to boost tourism. Mr. Ashe established a police civilian review board, and in January 2004 he received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission's chair award for his work on behalf of improving race relations. As Mayor he also made historic preservation a theme of his tenure.

Amb. Ashe was awarded on October 14, 2004 the Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal at the local level. This award, from the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in association with the National Park Foundation, was given in recognition of his work on parks and greenways while he was Mayor of Knoxville.

In 1995, Mr. Ashe was elected president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He also served as President of the Tennessee Municipal League. As a leader in both organizations he led a bipartisan effort to curb unfunded federal mandates.

He was appointed by both Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations.

Mr. Ashe was appointed by President George W. Bush to the Board of Directors of Fannie Mae in 2001 where he served to May 24, 2004.

Amb. Ashe is married to the former Joan Plumlee and they have two children, J. Victor, 15, and Martha, 12. Mrs. Ashe was an elementary school teacher for 13 years.

Amb. Ashe is an avid hiker.